THE SUPERVISORY BOARD FOR
THE CORRECTIONAL SERVICE

Annual Report 2025



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Façade Åna Prison

Chair's Report

The year 2025 marked the launch of the new national Supervisory Board for the Correctional Service. Five regional supervisory boards have been merged into a single national supervisory board.

The aim of the change was to strengthen equal treatment and quality, pool expertise and ensure more comprehensive and clear supervision of the Correctional Service's activities – both in prison and when executing sentences in the community.

The Correctional Service administers one of society's most far-reaching instruments. When people are deprived of their liberty, this entails a special responsibility to ensure that the sentence is served in a responsible and humane manner. Deprivation of liberty constitutes the punishment itself – however, the individual must not be deprived of any rights beyond what is prescribed by law. The Supervisory Board's task is to carry out independent and regular supervision of how this responsibility is fulfilled.

It is with great respect for our social mandate and for those affected by the execution of sentences that we present the Supervisory Board's Annual Report for 2025. The Annual Report summarises our experiences from inspection visits in 2025. It provides an overview of trends, ongoing challenges and areas where we see a need for action.

In 2025, we have observed that the Correctional Service is under pressure in several areas, including capacity, staffing and a more diverse group of pre-trial detainees and convicted offenders. When capacity is stretched, the impact is quickly felt in day-to-day practice. This may mean less time for follow-up, fewer activities, challenges with healthcare provision, or that measures which were actually intended to be short-term end up lasting longer than planned.

The Supervisory Board is concerned with how fundamental rights are safeguarded in practice. We aim to help prevent undignified conditions and breaches of rights, and to highlight areas where improvements are needed. The Supervisory Board's work is based on a simple but demanding premise: being present. Through visits, interviews, document reviews and follow-up of individual cases, we seek to gain a comprehensive picture of practices, both in areas where they are at their best and in areas where they need improvement. We place great emphasis on treating people with respect and on listening to prisoners, convicted offenders, their relatives, staff and management. The insights gained from these interactions form the basis of our assessments and recommendations.

I would like to extend my special thanks to the secretariat and the local members of the Supervisory Board for their professional and conscientious efforts throughout a hectic first year. Thank you to the staff and management of the Correctional Service for their cooperation, openness and willingness to engage in dialogue. Effective supervision depends precisely on this – that we, as the Supervisory Board, can maintain a clear and independent voice, while maintaining a constructive relationship with those we supervise.

The 2025 Annual Report is intended as a contribution to learning and improvement. Our goal is for the Correctional Service to be safe, fair and effective. The execution of sentences must be carried out in a way that safeguards both the protection of society and human dignity. We hope this report will be useful to decision-makers, professional communities, the general public and all those affected by the execution of sentences. We also hope that it will strengthen the foundations for the further development of an area that concerns us all.

Verna Rege Nilssen
Chair



Vardø, March 2026

1. Introduction

1.1 Mandate and independence

The Supervisory Board for the Correctional Service shall carry out regular oversight to ensure that prisoners in the correctional service and those serving sentences outside institutions are treated in accordance with applicable law.[1] In addition, the Supervisory Board shall ensure that the welfare of prisoners in correctional service institutions is safeguarded.[1]

The Supervisory Board may supervise all levels of the Correctional Service, as well as pre-trial detention and the execution of sentences for which the Correctional Service has full or partial responsibility outside its own institutions.[2] The Supervisory Board is independent of the Correctional Service and operates with complete independence.[3]

In carrying out its supervisory duties, the Supervisory Board shall have access to the Correctional Service's outdoor areas and buildings, all institutions where the Correctional Service is responsible for the safety of convicted persons and prisoners, all necessary information and all locations where the Correctional Service processes personal data.[4]

The Correctional Service shall ensure that convicted persons and prisoners are able to contact the Supervisory Board before, during and between supervisory visits.

1.2 Duties and composition

1.2.1. Management

The Supervisory Board's leadership consists of lawyer Verna Rege Nilssen (chair), team leader at the Patient and User Ombudsman Oddvar Thorbjørnsen Faltin (first deputy chair) and lawyer Tonje Lilaas Larsen (second deputy chair). The management decides which entities to inspect and when. They are also responsible for heading the inspections and for the content of the inspection reports.

1.2.2. Members

Upon establishment, the Supervisory Board consisted of a total of 71 members appointed by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security. There must be at least one member from each county, and members are appointed for a term of two or four years, with the possibility of reappointment for up to four years.[5]

At the end of 2025, the Supervisory Board had 61 members.[1] An induction meeting was organised in April 2025, and since then the local members have taken part in supervisory visits to both prisons and probation offices. The members have also taken part in the welfare visits carried out during the last six months in 2025, and from 2026 will carry out welfare visits independently. A digital joint meeting was also held towards the end of 2025. This is important for sharing experiences, enhancing the expertise of management and members, and establishing consistent practices across regions.

1.2.3. The Secretariat

The Supervisory Board's secretariat functions have been assigned to the Civil Justice Administration (SRF). The secretariat complies with the rules on extended confidentiality set out in section 9c, first paragraph, of the Execution of Sentences Act.

The Secretariat consisted of between four and seven staff members during the period from January to December 2025. From September 2025, the secretariat had five permanent staff members. The secretariat assists the Supervisory Board in developing supervisory methodology and handling cases before, during and after supervision. The secretariat also provides administrative support, maintains archives, and is responsible for financial management and the payment of remuneration to the members of the Supervisory Board.

1 Section 9(1) of the Execution of Sentences Act.
2 Regulations on the Supervisory Board for the Correctional Service, Section 3, first paragraph.
3 Section 9, second paragraph, of the Execution of Sentences Act.
4 Regulations on the Supervisory Board for the Correctional Service, Section 3, second paragraph.
5 Section 9b, first paragraph, of the Execution of Sentences Act.

1.3 Outline of the report

The Annual Report first provides a summary of the Supervisory Board's activities in 2025 in section 2. It then reviews selected topics from the Supervisory Board's first year of operations in section 3, before providing a conclusion in section 4. An overview of the Supervisory Board's activities is included in section 5.



Temporary staff at the time of the Secretariat's establishment.
From left: Samantha Svenkerud McInerney, Mari Gjølberg Gedde and Veronika Wiese



Management, from left: Tonje Lilaas Larsen, Verna Rege Nilssen and Oddvar T Faltin



Staff at the secretariat at the end of the year.
From left: Runa Åsgard Mandt, Adrian Leander Skagen, Marte Slette Glorvigen, Ane Grindstad and Elisabeth Røste

The Supervisory Board for the Correctional Service shall carry out regular inspections to ensure that prisoners within the correctional service, and those serving sentences outside institutions, are treated in accordance with applicable law.

2. The Supervisory Board's activities

2.1. On-site inspections

In 2025, the Supervisory Board carried out 32 announced inspections of prisons, transitional housing and probation offices. The inspections were broadly structured, and we examined a range of different topics. In addition to planned inspections, the Supervisory Board has carried out inspections following unexpected deaths. The Supervisory Board carried out six such inspections in 2025. This is discussed in more detail in section 3.6. Following each inspection, an inspection report is produced.

To ensure a consistent working method, the entire management team and two members of the secretariat took part in the inspections during the period from the start in January until April 2025. For the remainder of 2025, each inspection has been led by one of the board chairs, who has carried out the inspection together with one or two members of the secretariat and two local members.

Prior to the inspections, the institutions were asked to submit documentation and make arrangements for the inspection, including ensuring that the Supervisory Board could conduct confidential interviews with prisoners.

On arrival at the institution, the Supervisory Board introduced itself to representatives of the institution. During inspections of prisons, a meeting was held with the prisoners' liaison committee. The meetings with the liaison committees provided important perspectives and highlighted issues that are important to the prisoners.

Following the meeting with the liaison committee, the Supervisory Board held a meeting with the institution's management. The documentation obtained prior to the inspection formed the basis of the meeting with the management.

An important part of the work involved in on-site inspections has been to familiarise ourselves with the facilities at the Correctional Service's institutions. Following meetings with the liaison committee and the management, a tour of the institution was therefore conducted. During the tour, we also had the opportunity to meet and speak with many inmates. In 2025, the Supervisory Board wished to facilitate one-to-one interviews with inmates during its inspection visits. Due to the high number of inmates requesting an interview, many visits extended into the afternoon, forcing the Supervisory Board to ask inmates to contact us by telephone instead. In 2026, the Supervisory Board will work to carry out more welfare visits, with the priority being to speak with the inmates.

2.2. Welfare visits

Welfare visits are a form of outreach work in which the Supervisory Board visits prisons to speak with prisoners and gather information that may be important for the Supervisory Board's future work. Welfare visits are intended to establish a regular presence in the institutions and help to make the Supervisory Board more visible and accessible to prisoners. No report is produced following welfare visits.

During 2025, the Supervisory Board carried out 27 welfare visits, during which one-to-one interviews with prisoners and/or liaison committees were offered. A management representative and two local members participated in all the welfare visits, except for two instances when local members undertook welfare visits independently.

The Supervisory Board visited all prisons in 2025.

2.3 Enquiries from prisoners and others

In addition to inspections and welfare visits, the Supervisory Board has dealt with enquiries received from prisoners, staff, relatives and others.

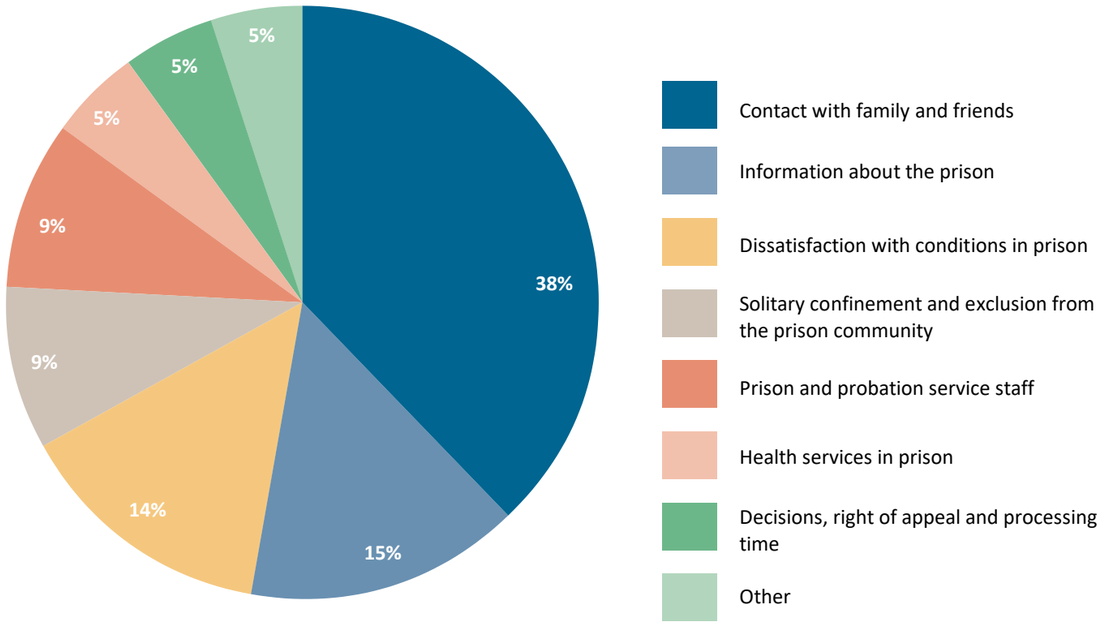
The Supervisory Board has a telephone line that is open from 12 noon to 2 pm, two to three days a week. Prisoners, relatives, staff, lawyers and others can call the secretariat via this helpline regarding all types of enquiries.

In addition to telephone calls, the secretariat has received enquiries by letter and email. The Secretariat has kept a record of all conversations and enquiries received by the Supervisory Board during inspections, welfare visits and via other channels. In response to some enquiries, the secretariat has taken follow-up action, such as obtaining further information from the prison. The Supervisory Board recorded a total of 748 individual enquiries in 2025. Just over 60 per cent of the enquiries were received by the secretariat via telephone calls, and approximately 80 per cent of the enquiries were from convicted prisoners or those in pre-trial detention. The remainder came from, amongst others, lawyers, relatives or staff at the Correctional Service.

The Supervisory Board has also obtained information from the Correctional Service following reports or other information which we have deemed worthy of further investigation.

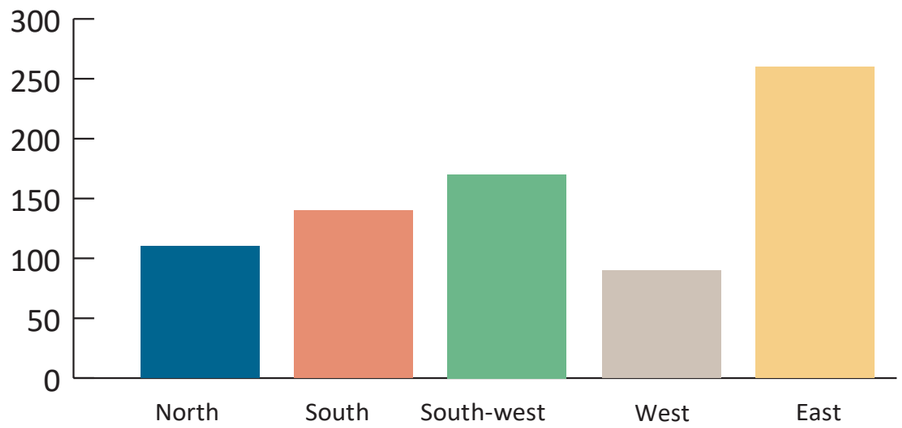
The chart below and on the next page shows the seven categories with the highest number of enquiries to the secretariat. The chart shows enquiries from both prisoners and others.[6]

Enquiries by category



6 It should be noted that some categories were created after the start of the scheme in January 2025.

Number of enquiries by region



2.4 Other activities

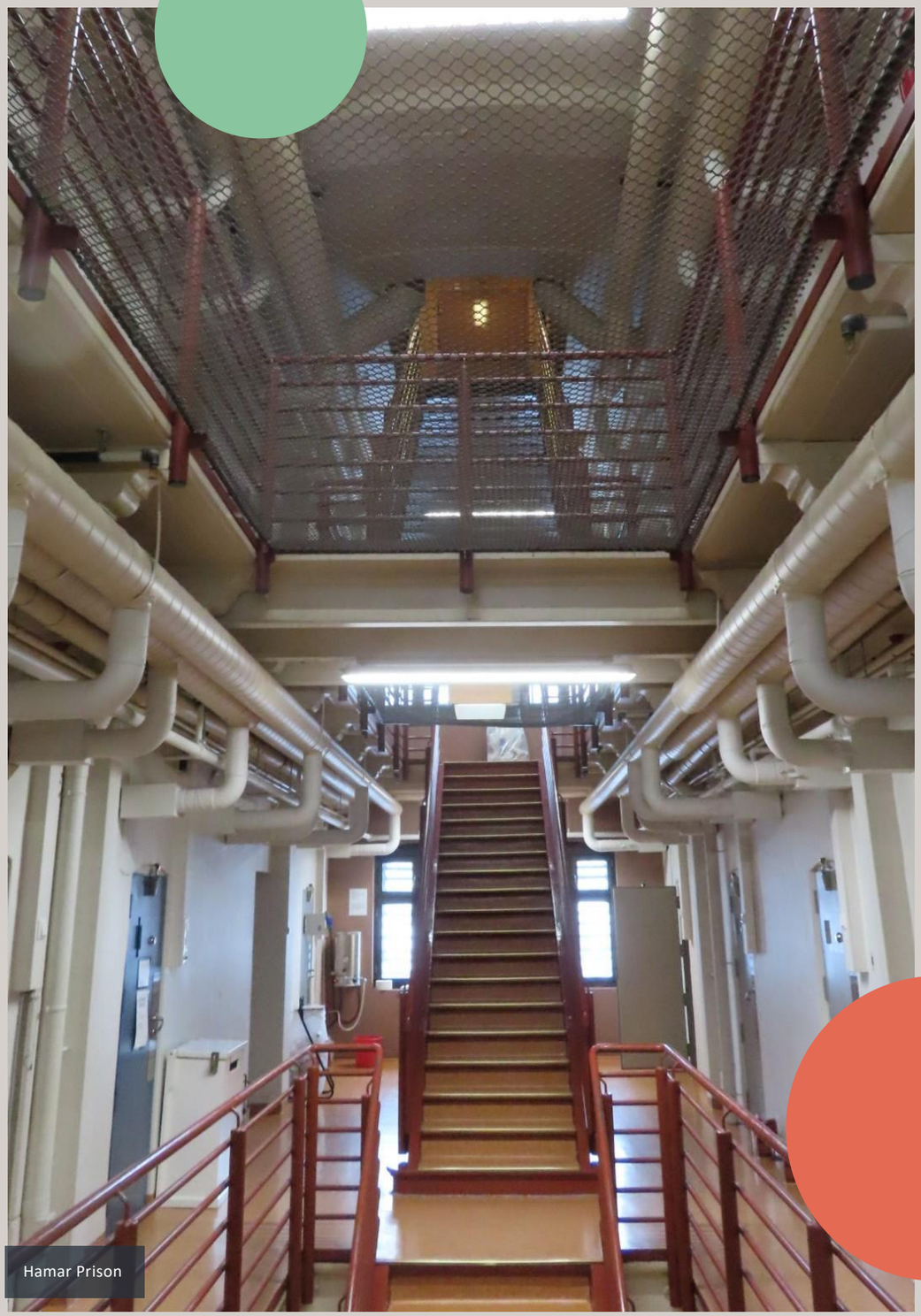
The Supervisory Board has taken part in a number of different events and meetings with both the Correctional Service and other stakeholders.[7]

In developing the scheme, it was important for us to draw on the experiences of other organisations that work with prisoners and their families, or that in other ways work to safeguard prisoners' rights. The Supervisory Board therefore invited civil society organisations, including the Norwegian Red Cross, the Norwegian Bar Association, For Fangers Pårørende (FFP), Jussbuss and JURK, to a consultation meeting in March 2025. All the organisations made a presentation in which they outlined their work and provided input on the areas that the Supervisory Board needs to investigate.

The Supervisory Board also held meetings with the Civil Ombudsman, the Norwegian Institute for Human Rights, the Ombudsman for Children and the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombudsman. The input provided during these meetings covered, among other things, the prison model, the use of interpreters in the correctional service, the use of restraint beds on women, prison conditions for minors, the incapacity to serve a sentence, as well as differences in practice between various units within the Norwegian Correctional Service. Meetings were also held with the Directorate of Correctional Services and the Correctional Service's University College and Training Centre (KRUS).

In addition, both the management and the secretariat have attended a number of different lectures, conferences and launch events, as well as courses and meetings.

7 An overview of all activities carried out can be found in section 5.



Hamar Prison

3. Selected topics from supervision

3.1 Introduction

The Supervisory Board has carried out general inspections in which a wide range of topics have been examined. We have endeavoured to examine the same conditions in all the prisons we have visited, in order to establish a basis for comparison. Set out below are various topics that the Supervisory Board investigated in 2025.

3.2 Reintegration into society

3.2.1. Activities on offer

The purpose of the execution of sentences is reintegration into society through the provision of programmes, courses, work or education within the prison.[8] As a general rule, these activities should be carried out in conjunction with other prisoners.[9]

The Supervisory Board has examined the prisons' employment and activity programmes.[10] The Supervisory Board has found that a stable and meaningful range of activities is of great importance for the inmates' well-being and motivation whilst serving their sentences. Some prisons offer a good range of activities, whilst others mainly provide low-threshold activities that do little to enhance prisoners' skills prior to release.

In many prisons, prisoners are offered a limited range of activities and work opportunities, partly due to staffing challenges and the prison's budget. When work and activities are cancelled due to understaffing, it is common for prisoners to be kept locked in their cells instead. At the time of the inspection, some prisons did not have enough qualified staff to operate the workshop, meaning that this facility remained closed until the prison had recruited new staff. In some prisons, workshop supervisors were on duty with no tasks to perform, because the prisoners who were scheduled to attend the workshop were locked in their cells. The Supervisory Board questions whether the workshop staff could have been used to unlock the prisoners' cells, if not for work then at least to socialise within the unit.

Some prisons are built with fewer work places than there are inmates, meaning that it will not be possible to offer a work place to everyone, even with adequate staffing levels and funding. The Supervisory Board also notes that the prisons' range of activities is vulnerable to changes at short notice.

Prisons generally report that their cooperation with schools is positive, and that the schools go to great lengths to find suitable programmes for the prisoners. Some prisons also have good arrangements in place to ensure that prisoners receive a certificate of competence even if they do not complete a full course of study.

The Supervisory Board emphasises the importance of all prisoners having access to meaningful employment and educational programmes that facilitate rehabilitation and prepare prisoners for reintegration into society upon completion of their sentences.

3.2.2. Personal officers and follow-up

Personal officers have primary responsibility for following up on individual prisoners and shall work actively alongside the prisoner in processes aimed at motivation and change. The work that personal officers carry out with individual prisoners must be documented so that the information follows the prisoner throughout their sentence.[11]

8 Section 3, third subsection, of the Execution of Sentences Act.
9 Section 17, first subsection, first sentence, of the Execution of Sentences Act.

10 There are variations in whether prisons record the number of inmates in employment based on the stated daily schedule or on actual hours worked, and in the number of hours of employment required before it is recorded in the statistics. The Supervisory Board has frequently recommended that prisons improve their procedures for recording employment and activities.
11 Circular from the Central Administration of the Correctional Service. Guidelines for the work of personal officers, 6 June 2002. KSF-2002-2.



Many prisoners report that it takes a long time before they come into contact with their personal officer. Several prisoners have stated that they do not know who their personal officer is, not even the person's name. In many prisons, personal officers are assigned on the basis of which cell the prisoner is allocated to, meaning that the prisoner is assigned a new personal officer when they change cells or wings. In some prisons, the personal officer remains with the prisoner for as long as the prisoner is serving their sentence at the same security level. The Supervisory Board considers this to be a positive measure that contributes to closer and more continuous follow-up.

An important task for the Correctional Service is to assess what support individual prisoners may need, either whilst serving their sentence or after release. To this end, they use, amongst other things, an assessment tool called 'Needs and Resources Assessment in the Correctional Service' (BRIK). Effective use of BRIK is important for increasing the likelihood of a successful release, without a relapse into crime.

The Supervisory Board has found that few prisons have met their targets for the number of assessments carried out in the course of a year. Several prisons have stated that the reason for the low level of target achievement
is that they believe BRIK is not a useful assessment tool, and that prisons instead carry out reintegration work in other ways, without this being documented. The Supervisory Board believes that reintegration work should be carried out in a structured manner. A lack of assessment, combined with a low level of activity and frequent changes of personal officer, leads the Supervisory Board to be concerned about whether prisoners are receiving adequate and appropriate support prior to release.

3.2.3. Participation

Inmates' participation, and the opportunity to be heard in matters that concern them, can help prevent conflict and build trust.

All prisons must have a consultative body comprising representatives of prisoners and staff.[12] Liaison committees are the most common form of consultative body.[13]

12 Where a majority of prisoners so wish, cf. Parliamentary Bill No. 5 (2000–2001), p. 158.
13 In some prisons, general meetings or meetings with a single representative are held instead.

The Supervisory Board believes that prisoner representatives should be elected by the prisoners themselves, and that the liaison committee should have a sufficient number of members to ensure proper representation.

The Supervisory Board has found that not all prisons have a consultative body, and that there is considerable variation in how such bodies operate. Several prisoner representatives report a lack of feedback from the prison management on the issues raised, and in most of the prisons the Supervisory Board has visited, there is a long interval between each time the liaison committee meets the prison management.

The Supervisory Board believes that prisoner representatives should be elected by the prisoners themselves, and that the liaison committee should have a sufficient number of members to ensure proper representation. The liaison committee should meet with the prison management on a regular basis, and the prison should provide feedback on the issues raised.

3.2.4. Progression through the sentence

The Execution of Sentences Act is based on the principle that convicted offenders should be reintegrated into society through a gradual transition to less restrictive forms of imprisonment.



Nevertheless, it is common for prisoners to be released directly from high-security prisons.

Most of the high-security prisons visited by the Supervisory Board had prisoners who met the criteria for transfer to a prison with a lower security level. Some have to wait for transfer because there are no vacancies in lower-security prisons. Others do not wish to change prisons because the relevant lower-security prison is a long way from the local community to which they are to be returned, or because the lower-security prison has shared cells.[14]

The conditions in a high-security prison offer prisoners limited opportunities to prepare for release. Examples of this include little or no access to the internet to secure a place on a course, a job or accommodation after completing their sentence, and a prison routine where prisoners have little control over their daily lives.

The Supervisory Board has found that there is insufficient capacity for serving sentences at a lower security level, and recommends that the Correctional Service increase its capacity, in addition to upgrading the prison facilities so that low-security prisons can offer single rooms.

Prisoners in both high- and low-security prisons may apply to serve the last six months of their sentence under electronic monitoring (electronic tagging).[15] The Supervisory Board notes that several probation services have reported spare capacity. It is crucial for the prisoners' rehabilitation that prisons maintain good cooperation with the probation service to identify suitable candidates for serving their sentences under electronic monitoring.[16]

3.2.5. Case processing

Prisoners may apply to the Correctional Service for leave, transfers to other prisons, court appearances and other measures. The Supervisory Board has observed that processing times are often long, both at local level and within the region.[17]

14 The basic principle is that prisoners must be held in single cells at night, cf. section 17(1), third sentence, of the Execution of Sentences Act.

15 Section 16a(1) of the Execution of Sentences Act.

16 Prisoners serving sentences for sexual offences, murder and serious violence are excluded from serving their sentences under electronic monitoring, cf. Section 7-2, fourth subsection, of the Regulations on the Execution of Sentences. The Supervisory Board is aware that the Ministry of Justice is drafting a proposal for new rules on who may be granted electronic monitoring, cf. the Ministry of Justice and Public Security's consultation letter on proposed amendments to the Execution of Sentences Act and the Regulations on the Execution of Sentences, etc. (use of electronic monitoring and digital monitoring measures in the Correctional Service) of 8 May 2024.

Often, no provisional response is given, or the prisoner is merely informed that the processing of the case will take longer than expected, without specifying when the prisoner can expect a response.[18] The long processing times are due to capacity constraints and, in some cases, the time it takes for the application to be forwarded to the competent authority. The long processing time causes frustration and is a particular problem in the case of applications for time-sensitive leave, such as holidays, birthdays, visits to seriously ill relatives or attendance at funerals and memorial services.

The Supervisory Board has found that it can also take a long time for prisons to respond to enquiries from the Supervisory Board's secretariat. Although enquiries are to be answered 'without undue delay'[19], it can take over a month to receive a reply, and the Secretariat has on several occasions been forced to resend enquiries in order to obtain a response from the prisons.

The Supervisory Board has examined the prisons' justifications in certain decisions concerning, amongst other things, leave and exclusion from the prison community. In many decisions, the justifications are formulaic. In many decisions on exclusion, the prisons state that they have assessed whether less restrictive measures are available and whether the exclusion is proportionate, without specifying which alternative measures have been considered. Often, there is no assessment of whether partial exclusion would have been an appropriate measure.[20] Another weakness is that decisions on exclusion and the use of security cells often fail to take the prisoner's state of health and specific needs into account in the proportionality assessment. This is particularly worrying when security cells are used as a measure to prevent the risk of suicide.[21]

The Supervisory Board considers that poorly reasoned decisions leave prisoners in a weak position to appeal against their exclusion or the use of a security cell.

The Supervisory Board has found that there is insufficient capacity for serving sentences at a lower security level, and recommends that the Correctional Service increase capacity, in addition to upgrading the prison facilities so that low-security prisons can offer single cells.

Many of the decisions also failed to inform inmates of their right to free legal aid.[22] This undermines the inmates' legal rights. The prisons have stated that such decisions are rarely appealed, and the Supervisory Board believes that the prisons should work to ensure that inmates are given a genuine opportunity to appeal against the decision. The Supervisory Board notes that decisions on exclusion taken by the regional offices of the Correctional Service, and in particular by the Eastern Region, are often better substantiated than those made by the prisons.

The Supervisory Board has also examined the prisons' assessments of the best interests of the child in several decisions, both where the prisoners themselves are children and where adult prisoners apply for visits by children or leave to spend time with children. In many cases, the justifications have appeared to be more a matter of formality than genuine assessments. Several decisions contained a statement that the best interests of the child had been assessed, without any further specification of what constitutes the best interests of the child or how this consideration had been weighed against other considerations. One decision to exclude a minor prisoner took into account the interests of other children in the unit, but not what was in the best interests of the child who was excluded. Several decisions failed to indicate that the child affected by the decision had been given the opportunity to express their views or to be heard in the matter. The Supervisory Board considers that children should be given the opportunity to express their views in matters that concern them, and that these views

17 Applications must be processed 'without undue delay', cf. Section 11a(1) of the Public Administration Act, cf. Section 7 of the Execution of Sentences Act.

18 Where the application concerns decisions on individual cases, such as applications for leave or parole, the Correctional Service must send a provisional reply stating that the application 'cannot be answered within one month of receipt', cf. Section 11a(3) of the Public Administration Act, cf. Section 7 of the Execution of Sentences Act.

19 Regulations on the Supervisory Board for the Correctional Service, Section 4, second subsection.

20 Section 37(3) of the Execution of Sentences Act.

21 This practice has been criticised by the Ombudsman; see the Ombudsman's report 'Suicide and attempted suicide in prison', 8 August 2023, p. 17.

22 Legal Aid Act, Section 11(1)(9) and (10)

Prisoners who are excluded from the prison community or held in complete isolation are entitled to at least two hours of meaningful contact with others every day.

must be given due weight by taking into account the child's age and stage of development.[23]

3.3 Lock-up and isolation

3.3.1. Daily schedules

The Execution of Sentences Act contains no minimum requirement for the number of hours an inmate's cell must remain unlocked, but international recommendations state that inmates who are not excluded from company should be offered *at least* eight hours of unlocked cell time and access to meaningful activities.[24]

Prisons regulate inmates' activities through daily schedules for each unit. The various units often have different 'profiles', and consequently offer varying opportunities for socialisation and activities. The Supervisory Board has found that the so-called 'communal units' generally have daily schedules designed to ensure that all inmates are unlocked from their cells for at least eight hours on weekdays. In many prisons, the daily schedule allowed for less unlocked time on weekends than on weekdays.

In high-security prisons, prisoners often serve their sentences in the reception unit at the start of their sentence. Reception units often have little communal activity in their daily schedule. Prisons justify this by stating that they wish to get to know the prisoners before they are transferred to a communal unit. The Supervisory Board notes that the lack of communal activity should be justified by a specific and individual assessment of each prisoner. A general practice whereby an inmate is not offered communal activities at the start of their sentence may be problematic. The time the prisoner spends in such units must be as short as possible.

The Supervisory Board has found that prisoners could be transferred from communal units to more restrictive units without a formal decision being taken. In some cases, the transfer appeared, at least in part, to be punitive.[25] The Supervisory Board considers that a transfer from an open unit to a more restrictive unit with little or no communal interaction will, in reality, often amount to exclusion from the community. The Supervisory Board recommends that prisons assess the necessity and proportionality of such transfers, and issue a formal decision on exclusion if the prisoner is transferred to a unit with very limited opportunities for communal interaction.

Some prisons had separate wings for prisoners who had been excluded from the prison community following a decision or placed in solitary confinement following a court order. In such units, communal living is not practised. Places in these units are counted as part of the prison's standard capacity. Prisoners who are transferred to the exclusion unit therefore lose their place in the communal unit and must wait for a vacancy in a communal unit before their stay in the exclusion unit can end. The Supervisory Board is concerned that the practice of having separate isolation units may result in periods of isolation being longer than necessary.[26]

The length of time spent in the communal unit depends not only on the daily schedule, but also on whether the prisoner has been offered an occupational programme and whether the daily routine is being followed. Several prisons often made exceptions to the daily routine due to low staffing levels.[27] Some prisons operate with alternative daily routines which are used when staffing levels are too low to follow the standard daily routine. The Supervisory Board has found that these alternative daily schedules result in prisoners being excluded from communal activities without a formal decision being taken.

23 Article 104, first subsection, second sentence, of the Constitution and Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child regulate children's right to be heard in matters affecting them.

24 The Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture. 26th General Report of the CPT. CPT/Inf(2017)5. April 2017. paragraph 58.

25 Exclusion over a period of time shall only be imposed to prevent future incidents, cf. Section 37 of the Execution of Sentences Act.

26 Prisons assessed the grounds for exclusion differently in these situations. Some prisons continued to uphold the original decision until a place became available in the communal wing. Other prisons justified continued exclusion on the basis of conditions relating to premises and staffing.

The Supervisory Board notes that exclusion on the grounds of conditions relating to premises and staffing, cf. section 37, ninth subsection, of the Execution of Sentences Act, must be of short duration, cf. SOM-2022-4454. However, amending the grounds for exclusion clarifies when the exclusions should actually have ceased, and ensures better protection of prisoners' legal rights.

27 Prisons often refer to this practice as 'single-cell lock-up', meaning that the prisoner spends time in their own cell. In some cases, the prison rotated which units were subject to single-cell lock-up, for example so that one unit had single-cell lock-up before lunch and another after lunch.



Evje Prison

Prisoners found the changes to daily schedules to be unpredictable. Furthermore, prisoners' legal certainty and the region's ability to exercise control are undermined when the prison fails to make decisions on exclusion. The Supervisory Board is concerned that the practice of single-cell lock-ups and alternative daily schedules contributes to lowering the threshold for when it is appropriate to exclude prisoners due to staffing challenges, and that these arrangements may circumvent the requirement that decisions must be taken and individual assessments carried out when prisoners are excluded from the general prison population.

3.3.2. Two hours of meaningful contact

Prisoners who are excluded from the prison community or held in complete isolation are entitled to a minimum of two hours of meaningful contact with others every day.[28]

The Supervisory Board has found that many prisoners who are excluded from the prison community, even for prolonged periods, do not receive two hours of meaningful daily contact with others. This is a cause for concern, particularly given that one of the harmful effects of isolation is that prisoners withdraw from other people.[29]

Several prisoners have also expressed feelings of insecurity due to the fact that prison officers are not sufficiently present in the communal areas of the unit.

The Supervisory Board is concerned about prisoners who self-isolate. The Supervisory Board found that several prisons did not record prisoners as self-isolating if the cell was unlocked, even if the prisoner spent the whole day alone in their cell. This was particularly the case in prisons with a lower security level, where cell doors are never locked by staff. The Supervisory Board fears that prisoners who self-isolate may develop isolation-related harm without this being detected, and that they do not always receive the support they should have.

Some prisoners do not wish to accept offers of contact, particularly where the contact offered is with prison officers. However, there are also instances where inmates are not offered two hours of meaningful contact every day. The Supervisory Board has noted that the correctional service, in its systems for recording

28 Norwegian Correctional Service. *Circular – Weekly schedules for excluded prisoners*, 12 June 2026. KDI 3/2023. paragraph 1.

29 The Parliamentary Ombudsman. *Special report to the Storting on solitary confinement and lack of human contact in Norwegian prisons*. Doc. 4:3 (2018/19). Oslo: 2019. p. 26.



Security cell, Halden

deviations, classifies a lack of two hours' meaningful contact as a 'less serious' breach. The Supervisory Board disagrees that this is 'less serious', and considers that a lack of two hours of meaningful contact with other people constitutes a risk of degrading treatment.[30] This applies in particular in cases where the prisoner has been isolated for a long period of time.

3.3.3. Security cells

Placing an inmate in a security cell is one of the most intrusive measures a prison can use to control an inmate. Staying in a security cell carries a high potential for harm, which increases the smaller the cell is and the less contact the prisoner has with the outside world.[31]

A security cell is a bare cell with a hole in the floor serving as a toilet. The Supervisory Board has observed considerable variation in the design of the security cells. In some of the cells, the water for the toilet is controlled from the outside, meaning that prisoners must ask for it to be flushed. The cells also vary in size and in terms of whether they have a view and natural light. With a few exceptions, all security cells were equipped with a clock, but the clocks often showed the wrong time or had stopped. Not everyone held in a security cell was seen by a doctor or other healthcare staff every day. Many prisons have made a concerted effort to reduce the use of security cells. At the same time, the Supervisory Board notes that several prisons have clear scope for improvement when it comes to assessing whether the use of a security cell is necessary and proportionate in a specific case.[32] The stressful conditions in security cells mean that, as a general rule, very little is required for a stay in a security cell to be disproportionate. When the right to appeal is undermined due to weak justifications and poor information regarding the inmates' rights, the risk of violations of inmates' rights increases.

30 Article 93, second paragraph, of the Constitution and Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

31 The Parliamentary Ombudsman. *Special Report to the Storting on solitary confinement and lack of human contact in Norwegian prisons*. Doc. 4:3 (2018/19). Oslo: 2019. p. 62.

32 See section 3.2.5.

Placing an inmate in a security cell is one of the most intrusive measures a prison can use to control an inmate. Staying in a security cell carries a high risk of harm, which increases the smaller the cell is and the less contact the prisoner has with the outside world.

Contact with family and friends

3.3.4. Telephone calls

Inmates are, in principle, entitled to unrestricted contact with family and other relatives.[33] Contact with the outside world is an important part of the principle of normality, and can also counteract the negative consequences of imprisonment, such as the effects of isolation.

In most high-security prisons, prisoners are allowed 30 minutes' telephone time per week,[34] whilst prisoners under the age of 18 are allowed at least three 20-minute calls per week.[35] Many prisons allow inmates to apply for extended telephone time if they so wish, for example because they have children.

The Supervisory Board considers that 30 minutes' telephone time per week offers very limited opportunities to maintain contact with family and friends. The Supervisory Board cannot see that the Correctional Service has justified that the restriction is a necessary and proportionate interference with the prisoners' right to private and family life. It has therefore been a recurring recommendation from the Supervisory Board that prisons extend calling time for prisoners on a general basis.

As long as calling time remains restricted, the Supervisory Board considers it important that prisons carry out individual assessments of whether certain prisoners require extended calling time, for example as a compensatory measure for prisoners who are unable to have physical visits, or during periods when the prison reduces the range of activities and social interaction available to prisoners due to staffing levels. Extended telephone hours should also be considered for prisoners who have children with whom they need to maintain contact, prisoners who are placed in solitary confinement, and prisoners at increased risk of self-harm and suicide.

On several occasions, the Supervisory Board has been informed that prisoners experience having their telephone calls monitored through wiretapping, without having received a written decision to that effect. Telephone monitoring is an intrusive measure, and the Supervisory Board emphasises that a written decision must be issued prior to the monitoring being carried out.[36] At the same time, the Supervisory Board has found that prisoners are being told that telephone calls exempt from monitoring, such as those to the Supervisory Board, will be monitored. This is regrettable as it may undermine confidence that communication with the Supervisory Board is confidential.[37]

The Supervisory Board has found that the quality of telephone services in many prisons is poor, and that call charges are very high. The quality issues were reportedly resolved in September 2025, but the Supervisory Board



33 Beyond the restrictions arising from the deprivation of liberty, the rights under, inter alia, Article 102 of the Constitution and Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights remain in force throughout the period of imprisonment.

34 Regulations on the Execution of Sentences, Section 3-29, second paragraph.

35 Regulations on the Execution of Sentences, Section 3-29, fourth paragraph.

36 The Directorate of Correctional Services. *Circular on provisional guidelines regarding telephone monitoring in prisons and prisoners' call charges*, 6 March 2023. KDI 1/2023.

37 Section 9a(2), final sentence, of the Execution of Sentences Act.



Illustrative image, Adobe

It is particularly important to ensure that prisoners have the opportunity to spend time with their children, where this is in the child's best interests. Prisons should facilitate the planning and conduct of visits with children by providing visiting facilities suitable for such visits and by appointing a designated child welfare officer at the prison.

finds that calls from the telephones within the prison wings are still occasionally unclear and choppy.

3.3.5. In-person visits

The Supervisory Board has observed that there is considerable variation between the visiting facilities in the various prisons. Some prisons have good visiting facilities, with visitor accommodation where visitors travelling from afar can stay overnight, or separate rooms and outdoor areas particularly suitable for spending time with children.
Other prisons have only one small and poorly furnished visiting room, which is used for all types of visits. The capacity to accommodate visits also varies from prison to prison.

It is particularly important to ensure that prisoners have the opportunity to spend time with their children, where this is in the child's best interests. Prisons should facilitate the planning and organisation of visits with children by providing visiting facilities suitable for such visits or by appointing a designated child welfare officer at the prison.

The opportunity to receive in-person visits is important, and prisons should ensure that the visiting facilities and capacity in the visiting area are adequate.

3.3.6. Digital visits

Digital visits in the form of video calls are a measure to alleviate isolation that increases prisoners' ability to maintain contact with the outside world, including for prisoners who are a long way from family and friends.

The Supervisory Board takes a positive view of this.

The Supervisory Board has noted that several prisons have encountered difficulties in implementing and carrying out digital visits. The Correctional Service has been working on developing a new solution for video visits since autumn 2024. The transition to a new system has been problematic, and several prisons and regions have found that the service has been unavailable at times. This has prevented prisoners from being able to carry out video visits.

The Supervisory Board has noted that several prisons have not allowed prisoners to have video visits from their own cells. This has been justified on the basis of structural factors, such as a lack of internet access in the cells, or the prison's own security assessment regarding the conduct of video visits. It appears that prisons, or regions, assess the security implications of conducting iPad visits differently. Consequently, the services they offer require different levels of resources in the various prisons.

In cases where the prison's visiting rooms have to be used to conduct video visits, this may be at the expense of in-person visits. In some prisons, organising and conducting video visits in visiting rooms has placed an additional burden on prison staff, which could have been avoided if prisoners were allowed to have iPad visits in their cells.

The Supervisory Board considers that the use of video visits should complement telephone calls and in-person visits, and help to increase the amount of contact with the outside world. The Supervisory Board is critical of the measure being used as a substitute for in-person visits or telephone calls, and has recommended in several reports that prisons should ensure that video visits are provided in addition to, rather than instead of, other forms of communication with the outside world.

3.4 Vulnerable groups

3.4.1. Children and young people

With special focus on youth prisons

The Supervisory Board visited all three regular youth units in 2025: Bjørgvin (four places), Eidsvoll

The young inmates also found it quite intense to be taught one-to-one, and it was more difficult when they could not 'hide away a little' amongst others in the classroom setting.

(six places) and Evje (four places). There are plans to expand the youth unit at Eidsvoll to twelve places and the one at Evje to eleven places. It appears to the Supervisory Board that there are differences in how the various youth units are run. This applied to internal rules for inmates, the use of uniforms and the physical layout of the prison.

In all the youth units, we were informed that some of the inmates exhibited challenging behaviour, which made it difficult to help them. This regularly led to young people being transferred from one unit to another, and as a result they felt they were being tossed around within the system. This is something the Supervisory Board has advised all youth units to be cautious about. The youth units house young people who have already experienced multiple losses in their lives. As we see it, a fresh start in a new prison is not always in the best interests of the individual child.

All youth units reported that they found it extremely challenging to maintain a sense of community for many of the young people. The duration of pre-trial detention is often shorter for young people than for adults, and many of the young people chose not to take part in activities, often explaining that they would soon be released from prison.

The young inmates also found one-to-one teaching quite intense, and it was more difficult when they could not 'hide away a bit' amongst others in the teaching setting. From what we have observed, much of the teaching offered is in theoretical subjects, something with which some of the prisoners have struggled outside prison as well.

It is important that the units provide a variety of educational programmes, including in practical subjects, from which individual prisoners can choose. It is important for all prisoners to have access to appropriately tailored activities, and this is particularly important for children and young people in prison. For children, it is also important to have good areas for play and sport, both outdoors and indoors, to encourage activity and provide an outlet for energy.

The Supervisory Board has found that a considerable amount of coercion was used in the youth units, and that the best interests of the child were not always adequately assessed when imposing exclusions, when deciding on the use of security cells, and when transferring children to another unit. This was also an issue raised in the Ombudsman's report on the Bjørgvin youth unit.[38] The conditions for the use of security cells for minors are stricter than those for adults. It must be *absolutely* necessary to use this intrusive coercive measure against children.[39] The Supervisory Board has found that such assessments are, to a large extent, not carried out.

The Correctional Service is obliged to ensure that children are given the opportunity to express their views on all matters affecting them.[40] The Supervisory Board has observed a number of instances where children were not asked for their views, and where decisions were made without their involvement. This applies to routines, rules and activities, as well as the design of communal areas and other parts of the units. At the same time, there have been cases where youth units have had positive experiences of involving young people in activity-related plans, which has contributed to higher levels of participation among the inmates.

The BRIK assessment is not designed for children and young people. We have seen examples of separate forms being used. In our view, staff in the Correctional Service have not been provided with the adequate tools to offer young

It is important that the units ensure a variety of educational programmes, where practical subjects are also included amongst the options available to individual prisoners.

38 The Civil Ombudsman. *Visit report – Use of security cells at Bjørgvin Prison, Western Youth Unit*. 2025/2042. Oslo: 21 October 2025.

39 Section 38(4) of the Execution of Sentences Act.

40 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 37(c).



Illustrative image, Adobe Stock



We know that women serving prison sentences face, on average, even greater health challenges than men and therefore require extra support.

Illustrative image, Adobe

people effective support. We also question whether staff without specific training in child welfare are sufficiently prepared to support young people and help them deal with complex challenges.

We also question how both user involvement and the principle of proximity are being upheld in the location of these units. The unit in Evje is situated far from public transport, and for many, also far from family and friends. There are no youth care units north of Bergen.

There is broad professional consensus that imprisonment is a last resort for children, and that there are specific requirements for the prison regime to be tailored to this target group. Based on the above-mentioned issues, the Supervisory Board's assessment, following its work in 2025, is that these specific requirements are not always met.

Children in adult prisons

As a clear starting point, children should not be placed in prison alongside adults.[41] Nevertheless, several of the prisons the Supervisory Board has visited have held inmates under the age of 18 during 2025, and a separate youth wing has been established at Eidsberg Prison.

The Supervisory Board is not aware of any overall plan from the Directorate of the Norwegian Correctional Service (KDI) for the supervision of prisoners under the age of 18 in adult prisons. Several prisons have had to draw up new procedures shortly before being informed that a child was being transferred to the prison at short notice. This is problematic. The Correctional Service is obliged to ensure that prisons receiving young prisoners have sound procedures and training in place. It is important that the Correctional Service provides sufficient time and other resources to strengthen expertise, both for staff dedicated to working with young people and for others who work with children and young people.

We also expect the Correctional Service to work actively to ensure that children's stays in adult prisons are as short as possible. The Supervisory Board will monitor whether the increase in the number of places at youth detention centres leads to this practice being reduced or avoided.

Transitions

Transfers between youth units or from a youth unit to an adult prison can be challenging. In 2025, the Supervisory Board has seen good examples of how such transitions can be managed as effectively as possible. In this context, we wish to highlight the importance of youth teams in prisons, and units that house only prisoners aged between 18 and 24. Such units help to safeguard prisoners in vulnerable situations and make transitions less fraught with risk.

The Supervisory Board has also seen examples where staff from the unit the inmate is leaving accompany them to the new prison and remain available there for a few days following the transfer. The Supervisory Board recommends that this practice be standardised.

3.4.2. Women

In 2025, the Supervisory Board visited all four women's prisons. The Supervisory Board is concerned about the prison placement options for women. For women, too, the northernmost prison is in Bergen. This affects the ability of many of the women to maintain contact with their children, family and friends. In our view, this will indirectly affect many children, although we cannot say which assessments of the 'best interests of the child' have formed the basis for the central guidelines on the allocation of prison places for women. We have also seen instances of women being held in police custody for several days whilst awaiting remand hearings, due to a lack of prison places nearby.

There are currently two high-security prisons for women, located in Skien and at Ullersmo, and three low-security prisons: Bredtveit in Oslo, Ravneberget near Sarpsborg and Bergen Prison. The Supervisory Board has expressed its concern in the media about the possible closure of women's wing at Bergen

In 2025, the Supervisory Board visited all four women's prisons. The Supervisory Board is concerned about the prison placement options for women.

41 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 37(c).

The Supervisory Board has received information that some prisoners experienced racism from both other prisoners and staff.

Prison. If this were to happen, Western Norway would also lose its prison placement options for women.

The buildings at Bredtveit and Ravneberget are in dire need of maintenance. At Ravneberget, there are single, double and four-person cells. Not having a private cell affects well-being whilst serving a sentence. The Supervisory Board has met with prisoners in high-security prisons who do not wish to apply for transfer to low-security facilities due to the physical conditions at the low-security facilities.

We know that women serving prison sentences face, on average, even greater health challenges than men and therefore require extra support. Women have different experiences of abuse and the use of force than men, and they often suffer from mental health issues that manifest themselves differently than in men. The solution, in the cases where there is a risk of self-harm, has often been to place them in a security cell. Through systematic efforts, including staff training and increased prisoner involvement, Skien Prison has reported that these challenges have been reduced. This, in turn, is said to have led to a reduced use of coercive measures. The prison also described how, in collaboration with the prisoners, they have changed the procedures for using coercion against prisoners who act out, in order to de-escalate the situation more quickly and gently. The Supervisory Board expects the experiences from Skien Prison to be applied in other parts of the Correctional Service.

Employment-related programmes are often tailored to men rather than women. Much of this is due to the fact that men's prisons are being converted or expanded to also accommodate women. For example, the clothing and the range of goods in the prison shop may be geared towards men, while the workshops may be geared towards vocational training in traditionally male-dominated trades. At the same time, the Supervisory Board notes that prisons are working to adapt their programmes for women. At Bredtveit Prison, we noted that the prison was working to facilitate the establishment of a hairdressing course. The Supervisory Board welcomes such adjustment efforts.

3.4.3. Prisoners with a foreign background

Prisoners with a foreign background are a particularly vulnerable group. The Supervisory Board considers that there is a risk of greater de facto isolation amongst prisoners with a foreign background, due to language barriers and long distances to contact persons outside the prison. These are also often prisoners who receive fewer in-person visits in prison due to geographical distance to their home town. The Supervisory Board believes that prisoners with fewer opportunities to communicate with fellow inmates should be granted more call time and more time for video visits so that they can speak in their own native language. The Correctional Service should also review the costs of telephone use. Telephone charges are much higher than outside prison, even for domestic calls. For telephone calls abroad, particularly outside Europe, the costs are especially high, with a call rate of up to 7 kroner per minute.

The Supervisory Board has received information that some prisoners experienced racism from both other prisoners and staff. The Supervisory Board emphasises that the feedback we have received suggests that this applies to only a few cases, but nevertheless expects the Correctional Service to pay particular attention to this issue.

The Supervisory Board notes that prisons make little use of interpreters and that Section 6 of the Interpreting Act is not always complied with. Some prisons have incurred no expenditure on interpreters at all, despite having inmates with very limited knowledge of Norwegian or English. This gives the Supervisory Board cause for concern regarding the legal rights, as well as the welfare, of these inmates. We question whether all prisoners have fully - or indeed at all – understood information such as the content of rulings or decisions, appeal procedures or verbal warnings. Good communication between staff and prisoners is crucial for preventing self-harm and suicide, conflicts and the use of coercion, as has also been highlighted by the Civil Ombudsman.[42]



In some prisons, the lack of interpreters has been explained by the fact that they have staff with the required language skills. Prisons often use fellow prisoners as interpreters in conversations with foreign prisoners, even in cases involving sensitive information. We consider this to be highly regrettable and in breach of data protection regulations. We have consistently recommended that prisons make greater use of interpreters to ensure that prisoners who cannot communicate with the prison in Norwegian or English understand the content of decisions and other information.

3.4.4. Prisoners sentenced to preventive detention in ordinary prisons

Preventive detention is a prison sentence with no fixed term, and it is therefore particularly important that the Correctional Service provides this group of prisoners with the necessary support to enable their reintegration into society. The purpose of preventive detention is to provide the person sentenced to preventive detention with measures that enable them to change the behaviour that justified the detention. According to key figures from the Correctional Service, there were 164 prisoners sentenced to preventive detention in Norwegian prisons at the end of 2025.[43] Most were held in high-security prisons, but there are also prisoners serving preventive detention in low-security prisons as part of the progression of their sentence.

Most of those sentenced to preventive detention serve their sentences in specially adapted facilities, with additional expertise and resources. Nevertheless, a number of prisoners sentenced to preventive detention are serving their sentences in ordinary prisons, without this expertise and without the prison being allocated additional resources.

The Supervisory Board finds it a cause for concern that prisoners sentenced to preventive detention are being held in ordinary prison facilities. For many, the assessment of needs and resources only begins once they are transferred to a detention centre.



Waiting times for places in detention centres create a risk that the period of detention will be longer than necessary for the detainee. The Supervisory Board believes that detainees should be offered compensatory measures whilst they are waiting to be transferred to a detention centre.

The Supervisory Board considers that there are too few detention places with a lower security level. The Supervisory Board expects the Directorate of Correctional Services to continuously monitor demand and availability of places, in order to ensure progression and prevent detainees from remaining in high-security prisons for longer than necessary.

3.5 Suicides and unexpected deaths

3.5.1. Introduction

The Correctional Service is required to notify the Supervisory Board when an inmate takes their own life. Unfortunately, the notification procedures have not functioned entirely as intended, meaning that some of the deaths have been identified through other channels. We have received information regarding a total of 8 inmates who took their own lives or died unexpectedly in 2025. The Supervisory Board has chosen to gather documentation and carry out on-site inspections following all these incidents.

It is important for us to emphasise that we did not expect to identify the specific causes that might have prevented the deaths. Nor have we sought to identify individuals who may have made mistakes. Our aim has been to investigate and identify possible lessons to be learnt regarding

42 The Civil Ombudsman. *The use of interpreters in Norwegian prisons*. Oslo: 24 April 2025.

43 The Directorate of Correctional Services. 'Key figures from the Correctional Services for December 2025.' (8 January 2026) https://kommunikasjon.ntb.no/ pressemelding/18767805/nokkeltall-fra-kriminalomsorgen-for-desember-2025?publisherId=17847130 retrieved 10 March 2026.

The Supervisory Board has observed many instances where prisoners at heightened risk of suicide have not been provided with an action plan. Measures that staff should consider in cases of heightened risk include, for example, closer monitoring by staff in the unit, in the form of conversations and engagement activities.

how the Correctional Service can best manage and support prisoners in this risk group.

Suicide risk and aftercare were also topics covered during the routine inspections. The findings we made there are also included in this summary.

3.5.2. Assessment of prisoners

During all the inspections we have carried out, both routine and those following unexpected deaths, we have requested copies of the assessment forms used to evaluate suicide risk. These forms contain, amongst other things, 12 specific questions. Where an inmate answers 'yes' to one or more of the last eight questions, they are considered to be at increased risk of taking their own life. In such cases, an action plan must be drawn up.

The Supervisory Board has noted that the assessment procedures in prisons are not thorough enough. It may take a long time before prisoners are assessed. The Supervisory Board has also observed instances where prisoners who do not speak Norwegian or English are assessed without an interpreter, or with other prisoners acting as interpreters. When inmates are transferred between prisons, there is variation as to whether they are assessed by the new prison. In cases where the inmate had shown signs of increasing despondency, or where the Correctional Service was aware of events in their life that could affect the risk of suicide – such as a death or a breakdown of relationships outside prison, or negative responses to applications for transfer to a lower-security facility or for release – renewed assessments were not always carried out. The Supervisory Board has issued a number of recommendations regarding improved assessment procedures and believes that, in addition to the assessment form, prisons should also obtain information about prisoners from other sources, such as the prosecutor's office, police custody facilities, other prisons and relatives.

3.5.3. Action plans

The Supervisory Board has seen many examples where prisoners at heightened risk of suicide have not been provided with an action plan. Measures that staff should consider in cases of heightened suicide risk include, among other things, closer monitoring by staff in the unit, in the form of conversations and activities. This may also involve cell checks at various intervals throughout the day, or increased cooperation with the health service. Some prisons are using increased contact with family and friends as a measure, but the Supervisory Board believes this should have been used more widely.

We are concerned that prisons are using security cells as a preventative measure for high-risk prisoners. Security cells should only be used when 'strictly necessary' to prevent suicide or self-harm, and should therefore be discontinued as soon as there is no longer an immediate risk that the prisoner might take their own life. In our view, a security cell will never be a preventive measure to prevent suicide, and should not form part of the action plan.

We have met prisoners who have told us that they are reluctant to talk to prison officers about mental health issues and suicidal thoughts. This is due to a fear of being transferred to wings with less social interaction, or, in the worst case, ending up in a security cell. This should not be the case.

Several of the action plans we reviewed listed supervision as the sole measure over time. Some of these referred to supervision combined with a medical consultation within a short period, but the prisoners were rarely followed up with a new list of measures following the consultation. Some were supervised only at night, while others were supervised around the clock.

Frequent cell checks may prevent the act of suicide itself, but in the Supervisory Board's view, regular observation will not be sufficient to reduce the prisoner's desire to take their own life. Other measures may be more important in this regard. The Supervisory Board therefore recommends that the Correctional Service consider measures other than supervision to prevent the risk of suicide. We also call for greater involvement of healthcare staff and their participation



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in the design, monitoring and evaluation of the action plan. We also note the lack of involvement of healthcare professionals when such action plans are discontinued.

3.5.4. Record-keeping and dissemination of information

It is, of course, not feasible for all staff to know every prisoner equally well. It is therefore important that the record-keeping system is used correctly. We have seen examples of information being recorded in various places, such as Kompis, DocuLive, duty logs, handwritten observation forms and risk boards in the duty room. These are dynamic systems, and the information is not stored in the individual's case file. This makes it difficult to ensure the continuous transfer of important information. Nor is it common practice to exchange written handover notes between prisons, summarising incidents or other matters that provide information on increased vulnerability to suicide. The Supervisory Board is under the impression that there is little tradition of reviewing the case files from stays in other prisons. We have been informed that information is passed on verbally between prisons, but that this information is not recorded in Kompis. Our concern is that the information therefore does not reach those who work with the prisoner on a day-to-day basis.

We have also noted a lack of recorded information in the Correctional Service's documents regarding whether prisoners have visited the health department and what information, if any, the health department has shared with the prison. In cases where prisoners have consented to the sharing of information, or where information has been shared due to a risk to lives or health, this must be recorded so that other staff can easily access this information. Our recommendation is that closer cooperation with the health department be established and that better procedures be drawn up for the sharing of information where prisoners have given their consent. Although the Supervisory Board does not oversee healthcare services in prisons, we have seen examples where healthcare has been virtually unavailable to prisoners with suicidal thoughts, or those in





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The Supervisory Board is critical of the fact that prison staff are left to make assessments on their own as to whether there is an imminent risk of prisoners taking their own lives.

solitary confinement. This applies in particular outside normal working hours on weekdays. Only a few prisons have healthcare staff available in the evenings or at weekends.

3.5.5. Capacity in health services provided by the local authority

The Supervisory Board is critical of the fact that staff in the Correctional Service are left to assess on their own whether there is an imminent risk of an inmate taking their own life. This is, in principle, a medical assessment, and the local authority must ensure sufficient capacity to carry out sound assessments.

The Supervisory Board has seen instances where the prison failed to report non-compliance when the health service did not carry out its own monitoring of prisoners held in security cells or placed in isolation for more than 22 hours, made errors in the dispensing of medication, or failed to fulfil other obligations. The Supervisory Board has consistently recommended that prisons report non-compliance on their own initiative if they find that the health service is not fulfilling its obligations.



4. Conclusion

The Supervisory Board is concerned that the Correctional Service's staffing challenges pose a risk of human rights violations being committed.

Although we have encountered a challenging situation and, at times, scepticism regarding our visits, we have met an incredible number of dedicated staff who are keen to do an even better job.

We have also met staff with ideas for improvement that are not taken on board by management. Fortunately, this is something we have not heard often, but at the same time we believe that the Correctional Service has much to gain from systematically soliciting suggestions for improvement from its own staff.

Another issue to which the Supervisory Board has responded over the course of the year is the limited use made of inmates' experiences. As mentioned above, we have seen that Skien Prison has had positive experiences involving inmates in the development of restraint techniques. They have also allowed the inmates themselves to design and develop a sensory garden for inmates in the restrictive unit. At Vik Prison, the prisoners themselves were involved in drawing up rules and procedures for daytime lock-in. Prisoners possess expertise on what it is like and what it should be like to be in prison. The Correctional Service should draw upon this expertise to a greater extent. It is also a fact that, for everyone, it is easier to accept shortcomings as long as we are given good information about changes and have had a say in matters that affect our own daily lives.

The Supervisory Board notes that responses to post-inspection recommendations often state that the prison is aware of the problem but lacks the capacity to resolve it independently. We are, of course, mindful that individual prisons do not have control over financial transfers, or over general guidelines and regulations.

Nevertheless, the recommendations are addressed to the individual institution being inspected. The Supervisory Board emphasises that the inspection reports are also forwarded to the region, and expects the reports to be used by the prisons, the regions and the Directorate of the Norwegian Correctional Service (KDI).

Based on the feedback we received over the past year, we wish to emphasise that the Correctional Service must ensure adequate and stable staffing levels in prisons. The Supervisory Board is concerned that the Correctional Service's staffing challenges pose a risk of human rights violations being committed.

The first year of the national Supervisory Board's operations has shown us that there are a large number of facilities under our supervision within the Correctional Service in Norway. During this first year, we have found it necessary to prioritise both high- and low-security prisons. An increasing number of people are serving their sentences within the community. The Supervisory Board looks forward to visiting more probation offices, transitional housing, facilities for serving sentences under Section 12 and accommodation covered by the state reimbursement scheme.





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5. Overview of activities

5.1. Supervision in prisons	
Oslo Prison	16 January 2025
Vadsø Prison	24 January 2025
Haugaland Prison, Haugesund Unit	19 February 2025
Haugaland Prison, Sandeid Unit	20 February 2025
Romerike Prison, East Youth Unit	12 March 2025
Ila Prison and Detention Centre	13 March 2025
Telemark Prison, Skien Unit	20 March 2025
Ringerike Prison	28 April 2025
Bjørgvin Prison, Youth Wing	8 May 2025
Innlandet Correctional Service, Department for Foreign Prisoners, High Security, Kongsvinger	14 May 2025
Trondheim Prison and Detention Centre, Kongensgate Wing	14 May 2025
Innlandet Correctional Service, Low-Security Unit, Kongsvinger	15 May 2025
Trondheim Prison and Detention Centre, Nermarka Division	15 May 2025
Romerike Prison, Ullersmo Unit	6 June 2025
Agder Prison, Froland Division	25 June 2025
Tromsø Prison	4 August 2025
Nordland Prison, Bodø High-Security Unit	27 August 2025
Bredtveit Prison, High-Security Wing	1 September 2025
Bergen Prison	19 September 2025
Agder Prison, Mandal Wing	24 September 2025
Agder Prison, South-West Youth Unit	25 September 2025
Halden Prison	17 October 2025
Ålesund Prison	21 October 2025
Åna Prison	21 November 2025
Indre Østfold Prison, Eidsberg Wing	5 December 2025
5.2. Supervision in transitional accommodation	
Oslo Transitional Housing, Gamlebyen Unit	11 March 2025

5.3. Supervision of probation offices

Oslo Probation Service	11 March 2025
Akershus Probation Service, Lillestrøm	23 April 2025
Akershus Probation Service Office, Ski	25 April 2025
Innlandet Correctional Service, Community Division, Kongsvinger	13 May 2025
Troms and Finnmark Probation Service, Hammerfest Branch	17 June 2025
Troms and Finnmark Probation Service, Tromsø Branch	5 August 2025

5.4. Supervision following an unexpected death

Hustad Prison	19 March 2025
Telemark Prison, Skien Division	9 May 2025
Vadsø Prison	18 August 2025
Nordland Prison, Bodø High-Security Unit	7 October 2025
Sem Prison	10 October 2025
Innlandet Correctional Service, Kongsvinger	18 November 2025

5.5. Welfare visits

Ringerike Prison	4 June 2025
Innlandet Correctional Service, Low-Security Unit, Valdres	1 October 2025
Trondheim Prison and Detention Centre, Leira Wing	6 October 2025
Ravneberget Prison	7 October 2025
Søndre Vestfold Prison, Berg Wing	9 October 2025
Sem Prison	10 October 2025
Innlandet Correctional Service, High-Security Wing, Hamar	14 October 2025
Innlandet Correctional Service, Low-Security Wing, Ilseng	15 October 2025
Åna Prison, Rødgata Unit	11 November 2025
Stavanger Prison	12 November 2025
Innlandet Correctional Service, High-Security Unit for Foreign Prisoners, Kongsvinger	12 November 2025
Innlandet Correctional Service, Low-Security Wing, Kongsvinger	13 November 2025
Ringerike Prison	18 November 2025
Verdal Prison	20 November 2025
Bergen Prison, Unit D	25 November 2025
Bjørgvin Prison	25 November 2025
Innlandet Correctional Service, High-Security Unit, Gjøvik	26 November 2025
Hustad Prison	2 December 2025
Romerike Prison, Kroksrud Unit	3 December 2025
Indre Østfold Prison, Trøgstad Wing	4 December 2025
Bredtveit Prison, Unit B2	5 December 2025
Nordland Prison, Mosjøen High-Security Wing	9 December 2025
Nordland Prison, Low-Security Wing, Fauske	10 December 2025
Bastøy Prison	11 December 2025
Nordre Vestfold Prison, Horten Unit	11 December 2025
Søndre Vestfold Prison, Larvik Unit	12 December 2025
Telemark Prison, Kragerø Unit	17 December 2025

5.6. Other activities

DEBATES:	
Debate with Jussbuss on low-security prisons	7 October 2025
Panel discussion on the right to life in prison, organised by the Norwegian Bar Association's Human Rights Committee	27 October 2025
COURSES AND MEETINGS:	
The Correctional Service's conference on solitary confinement, organised by KDI and KRUS	24 April 2025
KRUS	24 April 2025
Lecture for fourth-semester prison officers at KRUS	16 May 2025
Lecture for the Bachelor's programme at KRUS	22 May 2025
The Eastern Region Correctional Service, the region's management meeting in Lillestrøm	22 May 2025
Correctional Services, Western Region: Regional management meeting in Vik, Sogn	26 May 2025
Correctional Services, South-West Region, regional management meeting in Sandnes	11 November 2025
Correctional Services, Southern Region, regional management meeting in Tønsberg	26 November 2025
MEETINGS:	
Meeting with KRUS	31 January 2025
Meeting with KDI	31 January 2025
Online meeting with the Supervisory Board in England	11 February 2025
Meeting with the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, the Ministry of Health and Care Services and the bereaved families of those who have taken their own lives in Mandal	28 February 2025
Meeting with UKOM	11 November 2025

CONSULTATION MEETINGS:	
Meeting with NIM	21 March 2025
Meeting with LDO	21 March 2025
Meeting with JURK, the Red Cross, Jussbuss, NFA, FFP, the Norwegian Bar Association and WayBack	21 March 2025
Meeting with the Ombudsman for Children	25 March 2025
Online meeting with KDI	20 June 2025
Online meeting with KDI	15 December 2025

LECTURES, CONFERENCES AND LAUNCHES:	
The KROM Conference	9–12 January 2025
Launch of a special report on solitary confinement and de facto isolation in prisons	4 March 2025
Changes in the Execution of Sentences Act: Human rights, rehabilitation and social responsibility	27–28 May 2025
The Parliamentary Ombudsman's seminar on the use of security cells in prisons	12 June 2025
Online information session with Gatejuristen	17 June 2025
Arendalsuka	11 to 13 August 2025
The International Corrections and Prisons Association (ICPA) Annual Conference, Istanbul, Turkey	26 to 31 October 2025
Criminal Law Conference organised by the Oslo and Akershus Probation Service	14 November 2025